

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-07 EB-08 NRC-05
OES-06 FEAE-00 ERDA-05 /119 W
-----011733Z 107403 /43

R 311341Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2302
INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USLO PEKING
CINCPAC
AMCONSUL BOMBAY
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMCONSUL MADRAS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NEW DELHI 4592

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IN

1. FOREIGN MINISTER A.B VAJPAYEE, SPEAKING INFORMALLY AT A
RECEPTION HE HOSTED FOR INDIAN AND FOREIGN JOURNALISTS MARCH
30, MADE FOLLOWING POINTS: (THE QUOTES ARE FROM PRESS ACCOUNTS,
BUT WE HAVE DISCUSSED THE CONFERENCE WITH REPORTERS WHO WERE PRESENT,
AND THEY TELL US THE ACCOUNTS DRAWN UPON ARE ACCURATE.)

2. FOREIGN POLICY: VAJPAYEE NOTED THAT FOREIGN POLICY WAS
NOT AN ISSUE IN THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN, AND SAID, "OBVIOUSLY,
THERE WAS BROAD NATIONAL CONSENSUS ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS".

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THE NEW GOVT WOULD HONOR ALL COMMITMENT MADE BY THE PREVIOUS GOVT
AND IT WILL CONTINUE ALL ON-GOING NEGOTIATIONS WITH EVERY COUNTRY.

3. NON-ALIGNMENT:

THE NEW GOVT HAS REAFFIRMED ITS COMMITMENT
TO NON-ALIGNMENT. IT WOULD TRY TO STRENGTHEN RELATIONS WITH ALL
COUNTRIES. INDIA IS LOOKING FORWARD TO APRIL 6-11 DELHI MEETING

OF NON-ALIGNED BUREAU. ASKED WHAT THE NEW GOVT MEANT BY "GENUINE" NON-ALIGNMENT, FOREIGN MINISTER SAID IT DID NOT IMPLY THAT THIS POLICY HAD NOT BEEN GENUINE IN THE PAST. THE OPPOSITION USED TO CRITICIZE SOME "MANIFESTATIONS OF DEVIATION", HE SAID, BUT THE POLICY ITSELF WAS NEVER IN QUESTION. INDIA WAS COMMITTED TO THE NON-ALIGNED PRESS POOL, AND CHANGES CONTEMPLATED IN INDIA'S OWN BROADCAST AND WIRE SERVICES WILL NOT APPLY TO THIS COMMITMENT.

4. PAKISTAN: THE NEW GOVT WILL MAKE SINCERE EFFORTS TO DEVELOP "COOPERATIVE RELATIONS WITH OUR NEIGHBORS". IT WILL "CONTINUE AND STRENGTHEN FURTHER" THE PROCESS OF NORMALIZATION WITH PAKISTAN. THERE SHOULD BE NO APPREHENSION THAT THERE IS GOING TO BE ANY REVERSAL OF THAT PROCESS.

5. BANGLADESH: NEGOTIATIONS ON THE FARAKKA ISSUE WILL CONTINUE AND THE GOVT IS IN CONTACT WITH THE BDG. VAJPAYEE HOPED AN AMICABLE SOLUTION WOULD BE FOUND WHICH WOULD SATISFY BOTH COUNTRIES.

6. CHINA: A GOOD BEGINNING FOR IMPROVING RELATIONS HAS BEEN MADE BY EXCHANGING AMBASSADORS WITH CHINA. "I HOPE," HE SAID, "THAT OUR RELATIONS WILL IMPROVE". VAJPAYEE DENIED THERE WAS ANY CONFUSION ON THIS ISSUE.

7. MIDDLE EAST: "OUR POSITION REMAINS UNCHANGED. WE WILL STAND BY AND SUPPORT ALL THE UN RESOLUTIONS". ISRAEL MUST VACATE ARAB TERRITORIES AND THE LEGITIMATE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIANS MUST BE RESTORED. INDIA RECOGNIZED ISRAEL BUT THE QUESTION OF ACCORDING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WAS A DIFFERENT MATTER. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ASKED IF ISRAEL WOULD BE TRANSFERRING ITS CONSULATE TO NEW DELHI FROM BOMBAY, VAJPAYEE SAID HE WAS NOT AWARE OF ANY SUCH MOVE.

8. USA: WHEN HIS ATTENTION WAS DRAWN TO REPORTS THAT PRESIDENT CARTER HAS APPROVED SOME MILITARY SALES TO PAKISTAN, VAJPAYEE SAID HE WOULD NOT MAKE ANY COMMENT ON THE BASIS OF PRESS REPORTS. THE GOVT WAS AWAITING DETAILS.

9. DIEGO GARCIA: "WE WOULD LIKE INDIAN OCEAN TO BE FREE OF BIG POWER RIVALRY".

10. NUCLEAR: THERE WAS NO CHANGE IN POLICY OF DEVELOPING NUCLEAR ENERGY FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES. AS FOR MORE NUCLEAR TESTS, HE SAID THAT HE HAD NOT GONE INTO THAT QUESTIONS SO FAR. ASKED ABOUT HIS PREVIOUS ADVOCACY OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS VAJPAYEE REPLIED, "I AM NO LONGER IN THE OPPOSITION".

11. COMMONWEALTH: "WE CHERISH OUR MEMBERSHIP IN COMMONWEALTH". INDIA WILL TAKE PART IN FORTHCOMING COMMONWEALTH PRIME MINISTERS

CONFERENCE.

12. SOVIET UNION: ACCORDING TO ONE PRESS ACCOUNT, VAJPAYEE'S STATEMENT ABOUT HONORING ALL PREVIOUS COMMITMENTS, WAS IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION ON INDO-SOVIET RELATIONS. THE PRESS ALSO REPORTS THAT VAJPAYEE HAD TALKS WITH SOVIET AMBASSADOR MALTSEV EARLIER IN THE DAY. HE REPORTEDLY ASSURED MALTSEV THAT THE NEW GOVT WOULD WORK FOR FUTURE STRENGTHENING OF BILATERAL RELATIONS, AND HE RE-NEWED THE GOI'S INVITATION TO SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTER GROMYKO TO VISIT INDIA AT A TIME CONVENIENT TO HIM. MALTSEV REPORTEDLY RETURNED VAJPAYEE'S SENTIMENTS AND STATED THAT THE SOVIET UNION ATTACHED GREAT IMPORTANCE TO ITS RELATIONS WITH INDIA AND WOULD CONTINUE TO DO SO.

13. COMMENT: VAJPAYEE'S PUBLIC REMARKS REINFORCE WHAT WE HAVE HEARD IN CONVERSATIONS WITH THE FOREIGN SECRETARY AND OTHER RANKING OFFICIALS IN THE MEA DURING THE PAST FEW DAYS. OUR INTERLOCUTEURS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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STRESS THAT THERE WILL BE NO BASIC CHANGES IN INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY WHICH WILL CONTINUE TO ITS PRESENT MODERATE THRUST. THE MEA'S FIRST REACTION TO VAJPAYEE SEEMS AS POSITIVE AS THE FAVOR-ABLE PRESS HE HAS ENJOYED TO DATE
SCHNEIDER

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Message Attributes

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